

THINKING ABOUT ANNE SEXTON'S LETTER IN MS

Words like glass
you see but can't
touch what's behind
them Renoir saying
nothing he did was
right If I'm not
trying on clothes
when I feel those
wild ups and downs
I'm writing letters
7 a day to a friend
Postcards like wild
birds like the
poems spit out pine
burning too fast
Words drugs like
vodka you wrap up
in flirt make
love to an audience
in red pajamas

THE LION TAMER'S WIFE: OR
THIS IS YOUR LIFE

She is pale from never
being in direct light
so the tv cameras
burn her eyes

One neighbor comes and
remembers her as a child
who loved kittens
not a woman jealous of

cats The woman a priest
will swear on NBC was
a virgin untouched
as the white skin her

husband flashes over
the belted satin
pants that hug
over what she has almost

stopped remembering she
misses An old woman in

a shawl stuns her like
a leopard rearing hissing

and the druggist knows
the pills she takes the
dose that increases It's
so long since she's been

touched The white teeth of
relatives gleam like knives
A woman who lent her a
vibrator has flown in from

L.A. dangles the dildo
for nationwide audiences
The fat lady tells how she's
heard her moaning There

are clowns her husband in
street clothes made up to
look like a German banker
telling how he remembers be

ing inside and there are no
tents to collapse and blur
cameras no leopards to take
back the attention she

thought for years she wanted

THE FEELING

like the smaller
of two Canadian
fishing boats
colliding going
down as fast as
it takes to write
this